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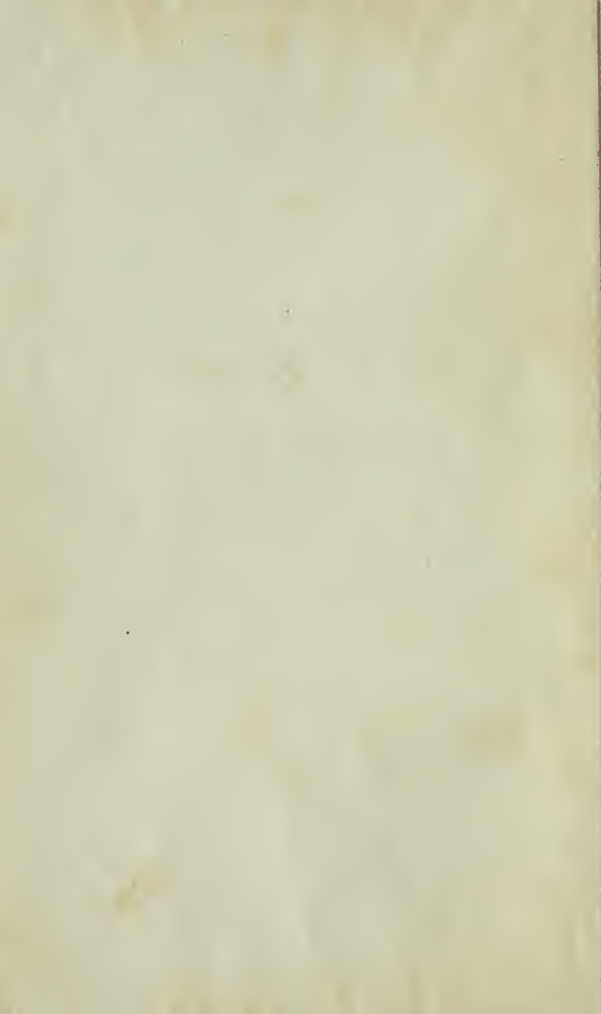
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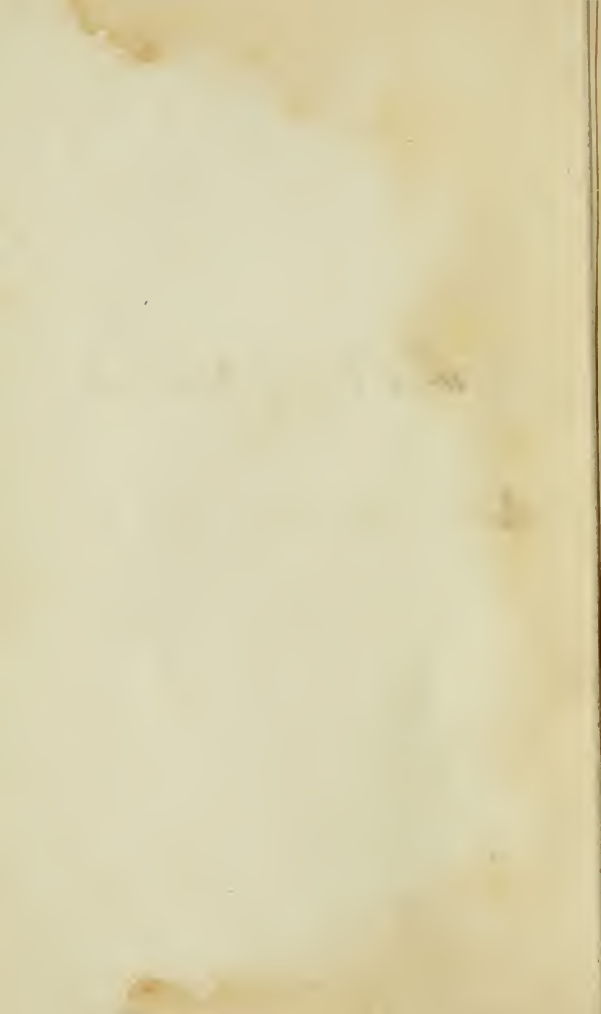
The Waiting Saviour





Miss Alice Lincoln

Norton Nov. 28/70.



THE WAITING SAVIOUR.

BY

REV. E. N. KIRK, D. D.

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THE WAITING SAVIOUR.

"BEHOLD I STAND AT THE DOOR AND KNOCK. IF ANY MAN HEAR MY VOICE, AND OPEN THE DOOR, I WILL COME IN TO HIM, AND WILL SUP WITH HIM, AND HE WITH ME." — Rev. iii. 20.

THAT beautiful scene has been sketched by a painter. He represents the door of the human heart by the door of a humble cottage. And the Saviour stands with his ear inclined toward the door, with his right hand raised, as if he had just been knocking, and were now listening to discover if any one

within was moving to admit and welcome him.

But when did this occur? Was it many centuries ago? Yes; and to-day, this moment, it is repeated, while you are thinking about it. And it is nothing less than *your own heart* that is described. Let us first inquire,

WHO IS IT THAT KNOCKS?

In turning to the first three chapters of Revelation, you will perceive that it is the Son of God who is here addressing man. It is the Lord Jesus Christ who stands at the door knocking. Oh that the Spirit of God may unseal our eyes, that we may look

upon the sight, upon this glorious being in such an attitude of condescension and kindness!

If it were an earthly scene, some distinguished man who had driven to our humble door with his magnificent horses and equipage, some monarch or prince, we could see it plainly, and feel the honor very deeply. But it is the King of kings and Lord of lords, even the only-begotten son of the Most High. We see the Maker of the worlds stooping to visit man, seeking an entrance into his heart; which means that he desires to be loved and trusted by us. The presence of no king at a beggar's door, of no angel or archangel, could be so

wonderful. It is the very King of heaven, whom the angels adore. And, in order to approach so near to us, he became man. It is the incarnate Son of God seeking admittance to our hearts. It is the crucified Saviour who took the title "Lamb of God," because he was to be slain as a propitiatory sacrifice for our redemption.

It is this wonderful Being, who, having become man, and having died for us, rose from the grave, ascended to heaven, and is forever seated at the right hand of the Eternal Majesty ; the being who will raise the dead at the last day, and sit upon his great white throne to judge the nations of

men, — welcoming the righteous to heaven, and banishing the ungodly from his father's presence for ever. This is he who will for ever be the acknowledged Redeemer of all the inhabitants of heaven. Even when walking unknown and despised on earth, twelve legions of angelic beings would have rushed from the heavenly courts, and drawn their flaming swords in his defense, if he had permitted them.

We can not get our mind too intently fixed on Him — his wonderful nature as God and man, his majesty and holiness, his condescension and tender love. He is God; as a Son, he has the nature and properties of

his Father. And he is true and proper man ; the only truly perfect man since Adam fell.

Look at him standing at the door of a human heart, at the door of your heart, knocking ! And as you gaze upon the scene, ask this question :

WHAT BRINGS HIM THERE ?

The answer is — he loves you ; not admires you ; nor thinks you to be good enough to please him. But he regards you as capable of becoming holy and blessed as the angels of God. Nay, he can raise you higher than the archangels, if he can but get possession of your heart — a full and undisputed entrance there.

He knows as you can not, your need of him. Without him you can never answer for one sin to God's justice. Apart from him your condition is fearful; and nothing more fearful about it than your ignorance of it, and carelessness. God indeed forgives sin; but it is only the penitent believer whom he forgives. God adopts the children of Adam into his family; but it is only "to them who believe on Christ" that "he gives power to become the sons of God" (John i. 12). God hears prayer. But prayer, to be accepted, must be offered in the name of his Son, by one who has faith in that Son; that is, who has admitted him into the heart.

It is said : “ There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are *in* Christ Jesus.” This phrase, so frequently used in the New Testament, means the same thing as Christ’s being in us. Both describe a nearness to the Lord and Saviour, — a union with him so intimate that it requires both forms of expression to set it forth. At one time the expression is used — “ Christ in you the hope of glory.” At another, Christ compares himself to the vine, and believers to the branches ; and says, “ If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered ; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.”

We need Christ while we are living, and we shall need him when dying. He alone can enable us to conquer death, and to exclaim, with the apostle, "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

We shall need him to introduce us to the heavenly mansions, and to uphold us in our blissful estate there for ever.

Now he knows all this. He sees that without him we are lost; earth has no remedy for our soul-sickness, — neither man nor angel can help us in the matters between our souls and our God. "There is no other name under heaven given among men, where-

by we must be saved.” He looks upon us with a compassion that knows no bounds. It has cost him a life of humiliation and contempt, suffering and death ; and yet he spared not himself.

Herein is love — love that surprises heaven, that amazes hell. And yet man alone is insensible to it, when he himself is the object of it. Nothing brings that king to the beggar’s door but the desire to benefit him. Jesus sees all the consequences if he does not take possession of your heart. This brings him there ; this has kept him there for years, constantly knocking, patiently waiting for admittance.

But his love is more than compas-

sion. He also *prizes* our love. This is a truth of which we hear little said in our poor unbelieving world ; but a truth full of the inspiration of hope to every one who really desires to be delivered from the power of sin, to become holy, and to be an inhabitant of the celestial country over which God will eternally reign.

He prizes our love. Hence we see that all our duty is summed up in loving him. Men often complain of the requirements of God as being unreasonable, of his law as being exacting and severe. But what does it require ? He who made it declares that it can all be stated in one word, — love. But we are not attempting

to vindicate the law. It is rather to show that when God makes our whole duty, all that he desires and requires of us, to consist in loving him, he shows two things,—that he prizes our love above everything we can be or do; and that he created us for that very purpose. He prizes our love and companionship. We may see it illustrated faintly in the love of a very eminent man for his little lisping child. In many things that child can not entertain him, can have no sympathy with him. Yet that child can strike a deeper chord in that man's heart than the most cultivated of all the friends that meet around his board. So Jesus delights in our

love ; so he is grieved at the withholding it from him. Some of the tenderest strains in the Old Testament are the expressions of God's grief that his people withheld their love and confidence from him.

Indeed, his calling himself our Father exhibits this very point. And there is nothing more powerfully adapted to bring our sinful hearts to repentance, than to discover that every moment we have lived in carelessness and unbelief we have been grieving the tender heart of our God and Saviour by disregarding his desire to be loved by us, and to have communion with us.

When the prodigal son left his

father's house, he was filled with his own projects, and had no thought, we may suppose, of the pang he was imparting to that parental heart. So men, by nature the children of God, have generally no conception of the wrong they are doing to their heavenly Father by living days and years upon his bounty, and yet turning entirely away from him, — making the moral distance as great as it is possible, by banishing him from their thoughts, their affections, their plans, their joys and sorrows and converse.

Jesus loves us ; and that is a love, he knows, of more value to us than all the treasures of the earth and all the planets, than the favor of men and ar

gels all combined together. He stands and knocks at the door because he loves us, and desires to be in such fellowship with us as is suitable to his nature and ours, and to the differences in our capacities. But it may still be asked —

WHY DOES HE KNOCK?

It is because we are unwilling to admit him ; and yet he never will force his way in. That great act of faith which is here represented by opening the door to Christ, and by a great variety of figures elsewhere in the Scriptures, is purely a free, voluntary act of the human spirit. If ever man is free, it is in receiving and in reject-

ing Christ. To accept him in all the blessed fullness of his grace is an act to which the entire spirit must consent. There must be no reservations, no questionings whether it is better to receive him; his heart must act with its fullest approbation and preference.

Therefore, so long as there is any holding back, any hesitation, any reluctance, he stands knocking. All this is vividly illustrated in the young magistrate who came running to the Saviour to have his hopes of salvation confirmed. Jesus knocked at the door. The man thought he was willing to receive the prophet of God, as he considered him, but he was

under a misapprehension. He was willing to do many things for the sake of heaven, but not to receive Christ. Hence the Saviour did not enter his heart. He knocked for admission. And when the young man found that to let Christ in was to turn the world out, he also discovered that he was not willing to receive Christ. And until he should be, the Lord would not enter, but simply knock.

HOW DOES HE KNOCK?

This part of the figurative description is intended to represent all the appeals and influences by which our minds and hearts are moved to think of God; of our spiritual welfare; of

our eternal destiny ; of our duty to God, our sins and our Saviour.

We have an inward ear that can hear these appeals. We call it conscience, when duty and sin are urged upon us. And we may properly always consider it as the hand of Christ knocking at the door, when our consciences are aroused to contemplate our sins, our guilt, our impending doom, our duty to flee to Christ. We hear him knocking when our hearts are stirred with ingenuous grief at the remembrance of our treatment of our heavenly Father and Redeemer ; when holiness appears lovely, and heaven desirable. In such moments, whether in the midst of prosperity

or bereavement, whether hearing or reading the Word of God, wherever it may be, we may properly bend our ear and listen to that gentle hand that was pierced for our sins. It is striking at the door of our humble dwelling. We may at such moments listen to the gentle voice of Him who poured out his last prayer for the forgiveness of his murderers. It is Jesus knocking, Jesus calling, Jesus asking for admittance to our hearts.

When the world has revealed its emptiness and vanity ; when its broken promises have left us bankrupt ; when our life-schemes are blasted ; when hopes lie like withered flowers at our feet ; when we return back

upon ourselves, wearied, disappointed, discouraged ; when all behind us seems but a distempered dream, and all before us a dreary waste — Jesus is knocking. If you listen, you will hear that divine voice saying : “ Come unto me, weary and heavy laden : I will give you rest. If any man drink of this water, he shall thirst again ; but he that drinketh of the water that I will give him, shall never thirst.”

We have witnessed this affecting spectacle : A mother who had ever kept her heart closed against the Saviour, but had opened it wholly to a little precious jewel he had committed to her care, one day received the

message that he was about to send for it. Instead of thankfulness that he had lent it so long, her heart rose up in bitter hostility. And when at length one came and took it from her, she gave herself up entirely to grief and despondency. Jesus sent for the jewel for a twofold purpose : He intended to put it in safe keeping ; and he was seeking to lead her to give him the supreme place in her heart. It was most affecting to look on the whole scene, and observe the King of heaven standing at that door knocking ; to hear him calling on her to admit him ; and then to see her refusing even to recognize his knock or his call, wholly absorbed in her own

loss, and murmuring at the arbitrariness and cruelty of God.

WHY DO WE KEEP HIM THUS WAITING ?

Every one that does it has his own reason. And yet they all may be reduced to one or two reasons ; some are unwilling to be saved by Christ, and others are unwilling to be saved at all. What ! you exclaim, is there any human being unwilling to be saved ? Yes, millions of such are to be found. Where ? Here — everywhere where men are to be found.

This must be looked into more closely ; because it may lead many to discover a fatal misapprehension on this subject very commonly enter-

tained. Being unwilling to be lost is not the same thing as being willing to be saved. This becomes plain and evident if you bring it to the test of ordinary life. No spendthrift can be found who is not unwilling to become poor. But every one of them is equally far from willing to be saved from poverty by living within his income. The drunkard is unwilling to die by the agonies of *delirium tremens* ; yet he is equally unwilling to be saved from it by abstaining from intoxicating liquors. So many are unwilling to lose their souls, who are equally unwilling to lose their sins. As soon as it is perceived that Christ wishes to enter our hearts in

order to make us holy, the doors are shut in his face by the majority. He declares that without holiness no man can see the Lord. But holiness is the opposite of our pride and selfishness and covetousness, envy, sensuality, and love of the world. The road to destruction, Jesus declares, is broad ; and the multitude are walking in it, because they prefer it to the narrow path that leads to life eternal.

Reader, deal honestly with thyself here. This is the pinch of the subject. This is the turning-point. These pages were written with a prayer for thy soul's salvation ; with earnest supplication that they might lead

each one of you to Christ and heaven. And here we reach the point that decides the destiny of the greater part of mankind.

You live, as it were, in a house with many apartments. You have furnished it to suit yourself. You have entertained such guests as suited your taste. You have lived constantly in some apartments, and left others to mold and dust and spiders. Some people live altogether in the upper chambers ; some in the cellar ; and some seem to have made a sub-cellar, where they and the beasts may herd together. Some live on the sunny side of the house, some on the shady side. Some frequently go

up to the observatory on the roof, whence they get a sight of high things, and can behold objects afar off. They see the cross from their window, and the mercy-seat and the judgment-seat, and heaven and hell. There they get a glimpse of God and Christ and the innumerable company of angels. Others have never trodden a foot within this hallowed room.

Now when Christ enters a house by the invitation of the tenant, a complete revolution takes place. He could not live in it as it was. There must be a new order of things. "Old things are passed away, and all things are become new." Much of the furniture must be changed. Some cham-

bers must be opened to the air and sunlight that have never been opened before since they were built. Old guests must cease their visits, and new ones be entertained. Some of the old servants must be dismissed, and new ones introduced.

Now men are naturally averse to revolutions and changes, and it is not a bad trait in human nature; but, like every other good thing, it becomes an evil when it is used out of its place. And it is the sum of evils when it makes us cling to what is bad, and repulse what is good. And this it is keeps Christ out of many a heart, — the aversion to the changes he requires.

WHAT ARE THESE CHANGES?

The *thoughts* must be changed. "I hate vain thoughts, but thy law do I love," was said by one who had made this great change. He found out how hateful, how dangerous they are, how offensive to Christ. Here, for instance, is a person who sits down and thinks over what he is and what he has that fosters his self-conceit. He has a mirror in one of his chambers that reflects his person in an attractive form. That chamber he frequently visits, and there gazes with admiration on his person, his hair, his eyes, his teeth, his figure, his dress, until he is filled with admiration. Or this magical mirror

reflects his possessions, his connections, his talents, and the admiration of others he has excited.

Now if Christ comes to dwell there, he will order that mirror to be broken, like Aaron's golden calf, into fragments — ground to powder, and thrown into the sea; and for it he will substitute God's mirror, that never flatters, never deceives, but reveals every deformity and defect. Thus he destroys vanity and pride. Thus he cherishes that lowliness, meekness, and humility which, in his eyes, are the real adornments of our nature.

These are the thoughts that cherish ambition. Napoleon Bonaparte

sat in his chamber, and visions floated through his brain representing him as crowned monarch of an empire broader than that of the Cæsars. If Napoleon had opened his heart to the Lord Jesus Christ, he would have banished those thoughts as meteors luring him to destruction. Christ would have showed him a nation blessed by his powerful mind, with common schools, industry, peace, Christian instruction, and the world rejoicing to hail his country as the model nation of the world.

Some persons sit and brood over their trials and the inconveniences of their position in society, and of their occupation ; thus constantly increas-

ing the sourness of their dispositions. Others indulge in thoughts that nourish their hatred, or their envy, or their revenge. Others live in a world of dreams, cherished by foolish books and plays, and by gossip. But wherever Christ enters, he changes all that, and introduces entirely new trains of thought. The Word of God then becomes the leading book in the house ; and the thoughts about every subject take their direction from it.

He produces another class of changes. It is, in the *feelings* indulged. Instead of trusting the promises that the world gives, to make us happy if we will only serve

it, he leads us to distrust the world, and trust God. In place of discontent he brings contentment with God's treatment of us. Instead of pride he brings humility. Instead of envy and revenge and jealousy and rivalry and indifference toward our fellow-men, he brings love, compassion, gentleness, meekness. Instead of zeal for worldly good and honor, he brings zeal for God's honor and men's salvation. Instead of hoping for much in this world, he gives us the hope of heaven.

Then there is yet another class of changes produced by his entrance into the heart. The whole *end, object, and purpose of life* are revolu-

tionized. Instead of living for self and for worldly good, the purpose is formed and fixed to live to honor God and bless mankind. Instead of living to lay up treasures on earth, or to enjoy the world, the purpose is fixed to lay up treasures in heaven, and to make this life the time of labor, that there may remain a rest for us after death.

Where Christ is the honored guest, a deep sense of responsibility to God is cherished; there is a reverence for man, as made in the image of God; an abhorrence of the selfishness and pride into which he has been seduced; and an earnest desire to have him turn out his wicked guests and re-

ceive the Lord Jesus Christ. Consequently, a new set of guests are entertained in that house; a new style of living and conversing is found there. Prayer and praise, and doing good to others, come to be very prominent occupations. Old companions gradually drop off, from a want of congeniality.

Now here is the first reason we assign for Christ's being kept at the door knocking, — an unwillingness to be saved by him, because that is his way of saving us. He does not merely blot out our past iniquities and save us from the consequences of former sins: he also saves us from the *power* of sin, from the very forms

of sinful, godless living that have most satisfied us.

With many and many a heart the last silly romance, the newly-arrived mountebank, has an enthusiastic welcome, while the Son of God, the Saviour of the soul, is kept waiting and knocking at the door in vain.

Now it is this that justifies the remark : people generally are unwilling to be saved. And, besides, many are unwilling to be saved by Christ.

And that probably sounds still more strangely than the other assertion. But it can be proved just as clearly.

It was announced centuries before Christ appeared that he was coming, and that he would be “despised and

rejected of men.” To see the reason of this we must look at the different classes of persons who keep him knocking at the door.

The speculative mind can not reason Christ out by any process of reason it has yet discovered, and is determined never to believe in him until his existence and his doctrines are demonstrated to be true. He never found the fragrance of a rose, the beauty of a landscape, the joys of friendship by this process. But he is determined that if Christ enters his heart it shall be by that door, and that alone. He must reason himself into piety.

There is another class of minds

we may denominate the sensuous. All that is said about religion and Christ, heaven and hell, seems to them to be far off, intangible, vague and uncertain. If they could see a vision, or hear the seven thunders of the judgment rolling, see Christ on the cross or Christ at the door, they might attach some importance to the subject. But, with them, the unseen is the unreal. They never saw Pe-king, but they believe there is such a city ; never saw a pestilence, but believe there is such a thing. And yet, when it comes to Christ, they are determined not to open the heart to him, because their bodily eyes do not behold him.

The self-righteous keep Christ out of their hearts, because they are unwilling to be saved on his terms. The Jews shut their hearts against him, because they said, "If we are to be saved by Christ, then there is an end to all our boasted superiority to other people. It is nothing that we were born of Abraham, nothing that we have been circumcised, nothing that we have offered sacrifices and paid tithes." That is too hard a doctrine. And others besides the Jews have the same difficulties in another form. Christ saves only lost sinners, and saves them all on the same level. The best deserve to be damned. "This is a hard saying." But it is

therefore, Jesus says, that the most abandoned people would enter the kingdom of heaven before those people who think themselves good. The beggar by the wayside gets the blessing which the nobleman in his palace misses. The self-righteous keep Christ knocking at the door. So, also, do the formalists — people who care more for ceremonies than for Christ. The Saviour comes into the heart, not by the priest, the church, the sacraments, but by the door of faith. We need not go up nor down, across the sea, or across the street, to find a Saviour. We need no holy water, nor holy man, nor holy building ; we need nothing but just what

Christ here mentions — hearken to his voice, and open the door, and he will come in. Then we have what all the churches and priests, from Aaron downward, can not give us. Nothing can be more contrary to the teachings of the Saviour, nothing more sure to keep the door of the heart shut against him, than the notion that for the soul's salvation we need any other aid of man than to repeat Christ's words, and to pray for us. Time and place and surrounding objects have nothing to do with Christ's entering the heart. But superstitious persons, unwilling really to be saved by him, and in his way, do a multitude of things to

drown his voice and his knockings, so that they shall think they are doing some great thing toward saving their souls, while, in fact, they are simply keeping Christ out of the heart, and preventing themselves from hearing him. Hence it is not wonderful that they want a great deal of smoke and noise and movement. The eye, the ear, the imagination must be kept constantly excited with something agreeable, that they may persuade themselves they really are religious, and are accomplishing much for their soul's benefit.

There is another class, the froward, who are unwilling to be saved by Christ because he declares they must

wear his cross openly, and not be ashamed of him among his enemies. If Christ comes into the heart, Satan will find it out, and make a great ado. The scoffers will know it; respectable people of the world will know it; the members of the family, ungodly companions will know it, and think it a sign of weakness to let Christ enter the heart, or to pretend to have received salvation from him. Rather than encounter that they would have him remain outside knocking.

Then there is another class, differing from all these, because they are more serious, more earnest, more willing to make any sacrifice Christ requires of them. But their diffi-

culty is unbelief. And it seems not to be easy for everybody to understand what the Scriptures mean by unbelief. Among other things, it describes a state of the heart that makes what God says unreal. God says that he saves the undeserving and the hell-deserving. But unbelief says, "If I were not so unworthy of God's mercy, if I had not so hard a heart,—if I had more conviction, I could come to Christ. But he can not, or he will not receive a case like mine." It is hard to discern how much pride lurks under that apparently modest covering. But, whatever it is, it prevents the person indulging it from rising to open the

door. Christ has said nothing about deserving his favor, nothing about how much conviction is necessary. He simply declares that if any man shall hearken to his voice, and open the door, he will come in and sup with him. The person, therefore, who does not open the door, does not wish to be saved by Christ, whatever other account he may give of the matter.

Now, reader, if you are beyond all this, and are willing to be saved, and to be saved by Christ —

WHAT MUST YOU DO TO BE SAVED?

Two things. Hearken and open to Christ. You are not to make

yourself worthy of God's favor ; you are not to dispose him to mercy ; you are not to provide or find a Saviour ; you are not to be saved without the Spirit of God, nor to do his work in your heart. You are simply to hearken to the Saviour's knocking, and open the door to him. You are to

HEARKEN.

The power of controlling the attention is very wonderful. A hundred sounds may be coming upon the ear at once, but we can choose to which one our attention shall be given. This is the difference between hearing and hearkening. In the din of

battle the soldier hearkens to one sound, the voice of his commander. Amid the storm at sea, the mariner listens not to the howling tempest nor the creaking ropes and groaning timbers. His ear is all intent to catch his commander's word.

So must we listen for the voice of our Redeemer. "Dead be my ear to every sound but thy dear voice, O Christ, my Lord!" Hearken! Turn away from the Babel-sounds of earth for a time — from the voice of friendship, the voices of nature. Listen to one, and one alone, the voice, the knocking of the Redeemer, who has come so far to save your soul.

Adam heard that voice, and fled

from it because he had sinned, but had not repented of sin. Felix heard it, and carelessly made an appointment to hear it again at some indefinite future time. Agrippa heard it, and was almost persuaded to invite the Saviour in; but he was not yet prepared for the change. The sacrifice was too great. Probably he never went beyond being almost persuaded. These cases are written for our warning. They are buoys floating over rocks on which others have made shipwreck of their souls.

If you distinctly hear the knocking of Christ at your door, then you have one other duty, — to arise and

OPEN THE DOOR.

This must be an act of your own free choice. Whatever bolts and bars are there to keep it shut, you must take out of the way. You must throw the door wide open, and say, "Come in, thou King of Glory: thou Saviour of my soul, come in. I give all up to thy control and service. Turn out what thou dost not approve. Introduce what and whom thou wilt. Thou art Master here; all is at thy disposal."

Lest, then, this language should be too figurative for some persons, and they should inquire what is literally intended by opening the door to the

Saviour, it may be said that he who thus describes himself as knocking at this door, has said in the same connection, "I the Lord search the heart." He knows every thought of the mind and every decision of the will. When, then, any heart has abandoned all selfish ends and plans, truly repented of former disobedience to God, and accepts Christ as he offers himself to be a Saviour, he is perfectly acquainted with it all. The door is opened to him the instant he is truly chosen and accepted as a Saviour from sin and its consequences. What, then, does he mean by the assurance that

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HE WILL ENTER, AND SUP WITH US?

When the Lord Jesus Christ enters a heart, he comes as a victorious king into a province which rebels had withdrawn from its allegiance,—as our government entered Savannah by its victorious army. The banner of the king at once floats from the citadel ; the power of the government is at once pledged for its protection and defense ; the privileges of citizenship are extended to the inhabitants. King Jesus enters to drive Satan and his legions from the heart, — those guests that we could never take to heaven with us ; a Christless heart becomes a heart filled with the

glorious presence of Jesus. What a change this is! Self and the world are dethroned. And what a deliverance is this! For self is a hard master. Its service is the source of unsatisfied longings, foolish fears, vain expectations, cruel disappointments.

If Christ enters, then the soul has found its true priest. You must have a mediator with God. Your legal standing is not good. You have forfeited the right to approach your Creator in your own name. Your house then wants an altar, and a heaven-appointed Priest. Blood must be sprinkled wherever guilt has defiled; for "without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin."

A sacrifice worthy of God must be offered. "Behold, then, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." When Israel was in Egypt, the destroying angel that smote to death the first-born son in every Egyptian dwelling passed harmless by the door-post sprinkled with the blood of the passover lamb. Our High Priest alone can sprinkle that blood on our door-posts.

When Christ enters the heart, he comes as the Light of the world, the Prince of prophets, shining into our darkness, and making us children of the light.

When Christ enters the heart, he brings the peace of God that passeth

all understanding; he brings the Holy Spirit, who transforms our spirits, recovering gradually the lost image of God, and annulling the sentence that consigned the body to the undying second death—pledges himself to raise it in glory and immortality at the last day.

When Christ enters the heart, he comes as the Head of the church, to introduce us into the blessed family of God, and shed abroad in our hearts the spirit of adoption, whereby we call God—Father. He comes as a Friend and Brother.

“I will sup with him.” The Jewish supper was the important meal; and sitting at the table together was the

mark of friendship. But this is full of wonders. The King calls the rebel, now penitent, to come and sit at the table with him in friendly intercourse; and angels, who are "sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation," wait upon the host and guest. It is wonderful: the King spreads the table at his own cost. He brings to it such viands and fruits and wines as earthly kings are too poor to furnish. And oh, what heavenly entertainment it is! Once Jesus overtook two sad-hearted men, and joining them as a stranger, walked on to the village where they lived. He did not knock at their door, but was at once invited to en-

ter and sit down to supper with them. All the way along their hearts had been glowing with delight as he entertained them with Bible-conversation. But at the supper they discovered who he was in the breaking of bread. So will he enter us, and make himself known to us in the breaking of bread. In a word, Christ is made to them that receive him “wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.” “To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.”

Now, after reading this, which is only an exhibition of small portions of what God’s Word contains, the first thing for every reader to do, is to

answer this question, Is Christ within the door of my heart, or on the outside? If the latter, then the next duty is, to listen to his voice and the knocking of his hand. Do you hear him? Does not the sound reverberate along every corridor, and through every chamber of your heart—majestic, holy, tender voice? Yes; it is as if a prisoner in his cell, condemned to death, should hear the king of the country at its door, asking if he would receive him within the dark and narrow enclosure. No earthly king would do it for a rebel against his crown. But our heavenly King does it. Hear him, then, O ye “prisoners of hope!” Harken to his voice. It

is the echo of every blessed invitation of his Word. Turn away from the vain sounds of earth, that have bewitched you. Bid them all be dumb, while you are listening to that one voice and call.

Then while you hear, remember he is standing at the door, listening to hear if any power within you stirs. Conscience, hast thou awaked to hear your Sovereign and your Judge? Heart, hast thou awaked to hear him? Oh, slumber not! oh, trifle not! He will not keep that attitude for ever. He has turned away from many a door, — turned away, turned away for ever. And if he should turn away from you, there will come a

day when you must hear that voice again ; but with what an altered tone ! If you would know how it can change its tone, read his description of the judgment scene, where he will say to those on his right hand : “ Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom ; ” and to those on his left hand : “ Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.”

He can not for ever bear this treatment : He will change his tone for them who keep him out beyond a certain time ; and then what will they do when he comes as the Judge of the quick and the dead ? They will “ call on the rocks and mountains to

fall on them, and hide them from the wrath of the Lamb.”

Hearken then, this day, this moment, to the voice of his love. And, as you listen, rise and open the door, exclaiming : “ Welcome, welcome dear Redeemer ! I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof ; but if thou wilt deign to enter so lowly a place, and be content with such society as mine, come in ; thrice welcome ! And let all the angels of God and the redeemed in earth and heaven shout ‘ hallelujah ; ’ for I this hour have received the Lord of Glory as my Saviour, King, and Brother, for time, and for all eternity.”

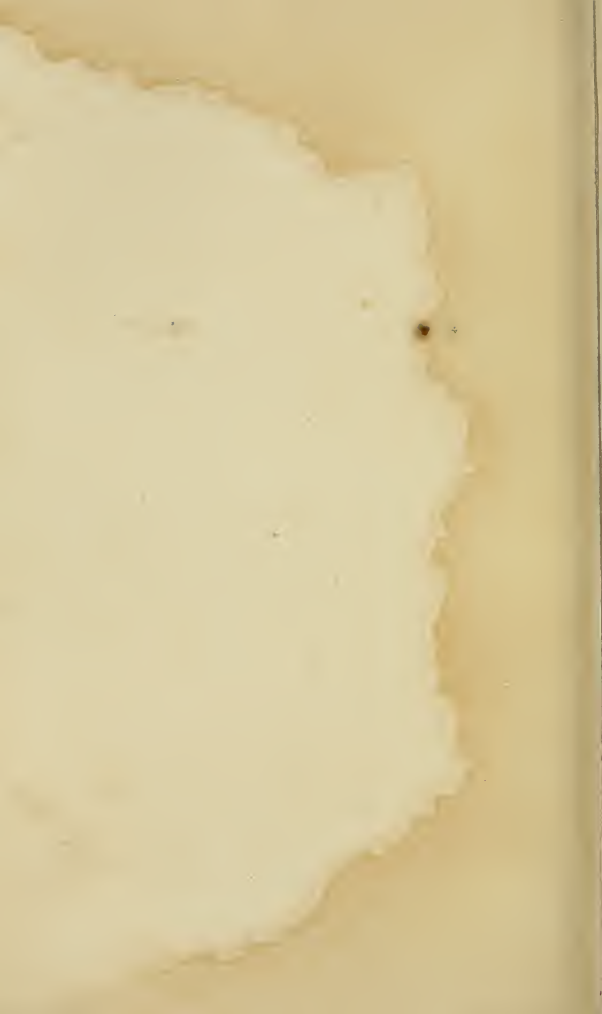




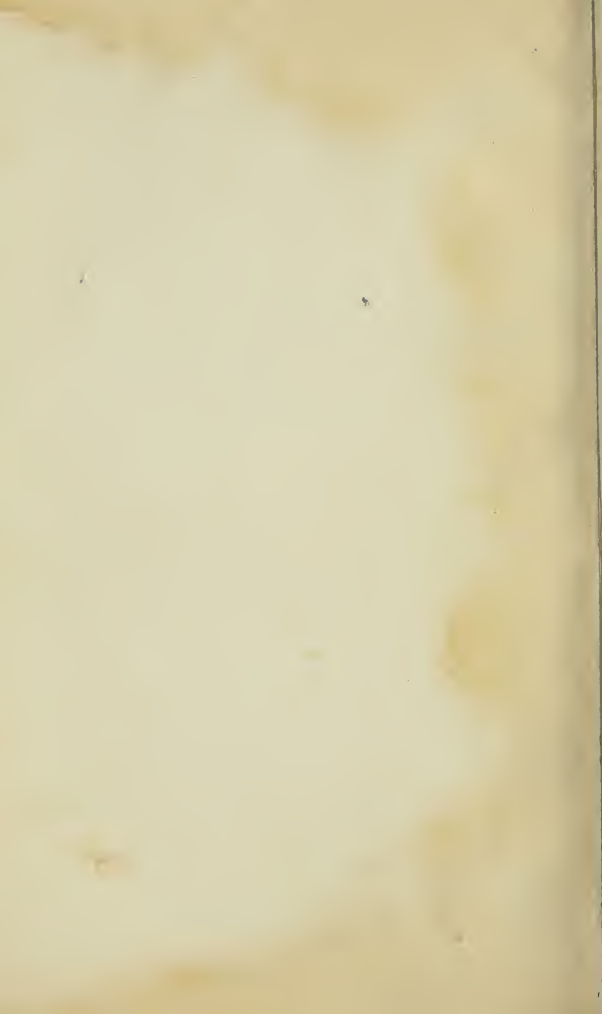










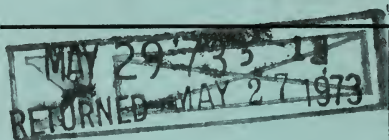




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